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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The guest chaplain, Bishop Christopher Coyne of Vermont, the Diocese of Burlington, will offer the prayer.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of hope and God of peace, from whom all blessings flow, may Your spirit of peace and wisdom descend upon all here present for the work of the Senate. May each of us seek to serve the common good of all, both in our great Nation and in the world at large.

And send some snow upon the ski slopes of Vermont soon.

We ask this in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Frances Kay Behm, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we have so many things going on in Washington these days, with just about everything from budgetary matters to wrapping up this session of the Congress.

I was delighted today to take a step back and, in my role as President pro tempore, introduce today's visiting Chaplain. I am always pleased to introduce the Chaplain, usually Dr. Barry Black, sometimes visiting ones, but this one is special.

He is the bishop of Burlington, which, really, the diocese covers all the State of Vermont. His name is Christopher Coyne. He knows our part of New England. He was born in Woburn, MA, and graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a B.A. in business, St. John's Seminary in Boston as a Master of Divinity, ordained a priest in June 1989, but then has fulfilled significant roles, both in the diocese where he originated and with the Vatican in Rome. And I will talk more about that at another time.

But he was elected chairman of the Committee of Communications of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

And when the bishops met, the voice you often heard was Bishop Coyne because of his credibility, his honesty, and the fact that he would give very direct answers.

And then Pope Francis named him bishop of the Diocese of Burlington, and he was installed in that January 29, 2015, and brought a new, really, wave of enthusiasm into the Catholic diocese in Vermont. He made it a point to go around the State meeting with people.

I would tell a personal story. I was at an event in Burlington on Veterans Day. I was going to be speaking there. And a jogger came up and tapped me on the shoulder. It was the bishop. He was out doing his morning run and walk. But it is something that is interrupted all the time because he will stop and talk with everybody, and they want to talk with him.

He is the kind of bishop every diocese should have: approachable, honest, good for the community. He has reached out to the Jewish community, the Protestant community. It has brought enthusiasm on both sides.

I see our distinguished majority leader on the floor who has been working hard the last few days on too many things, but I know he will get us through it, and I will do my part on the appropriations.

Mr. Leader, I just wanted to say a word about our distinguished visiting Chaplain Bishop Coyne, taking advantage of the privileges of the floor, sitting over there, and I will yield the floor and yield to you.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank Senator LEAHY for so many things he does, including his recent brief remarks a few minutes ago. We all know how much we are going to miss Senator LEAHY in this body and what a tower of strength and accomplishment he has been. But we will

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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have more to say about that even—tonight or tomorrow night?—tomorrow night at the retirement dinner.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Today, Mr. President, the Senate reaches an important milestone. We will confirm our 89th and 90th judicial nominees to serve lifetime appointments on the Federal bench. Starting at noon, the Senate will hold a total of four rollcall votes throughout the afternoon on the nominations of Frances Behm to the Eastern District of Michigan and Kelley Hodge to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

We are on pace to finish this year with more judges confirmed to the bench than were confirmed in the first 2 years of either of the previous two administrations. These nominees stand out not just in their numbers but also in their groundbreaking diversity. Almost 50 percent of the judges we have confirmed are women of color—50 percent. That has never happened before, and I am confident that a more diverse bench will go a long way in cultivating trust in our courts and in our democracy.

Just as important, once we confirm the nominations of Tamika Montgomery-Reeves and Dana Douglas very soon, the Senate will also have confirmed a total of 11 Black women to serve as appellate judges, by far the most ever under any single President.

Before President Biden, only 8 such nominees had been confirmed in total, and now, in our first 2 years, we are already on the brink of confirming 11.

Today, our Federal judiciary is far more balanced, far more diverse, and far more experienced than the one our country had 2 years ago. It is something we are very proud of. You can rest assured, Mr. President, that Senate Democrats are going to maintain this priority on judges as the 118th Congress begins next year.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, on government funding, off the floor, negotiations continue between both parties on charting a path toward fully funding the government for the next fiscal year. I spent much of the day yesterday going from one meeting to the next, sitting down first with Leader McCONNELL and his team and then with Speaker PELOSI and her team, and I stayed on the phone throughout the evening as Senators worked to bridge the gap on funding.

We are working very hard on getting something done before the deadline, but there is a lot of negotiating left to do. Both sides understand that fully funding the government is extremely important and anything less risks harm to our troops and the Federal Government's ability to serve the public. We don't want to see that outcome so both sides must remain at the table and continue working.

Tomorrow, Senators will attend a classified briefing on the latest developments on the war in Ukraine. I hope it sinks in for all Members in attend-

ance just how critical U.S. aid has been, not just for our allies but for our own protection. I hope it sinks in that this is one of the most important reasons why we must reach an agreement.

It is not an easy process, but it is supremely important nonetheless. For the well-being of our troops, for the preservation of our national security, and for the tens of millions of Americans who look to the Federal Government for a wide range of basic services, Democrats and Republicans must work together to fully fund the Federal Government.

CHIPS AND SCIENCE ACT

Mr. President, now on CHIPS and Science, today, President Biden will be in Arizona to visit the construction site for what will become one of the largest chip manufacturing plants in America. What was originally announced to be a \$12 billion investment will now be a \$40 billion project, with the first chip fab set to open a year from now.

This is one of the highly visible examples of how the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act is already paying dividends for the economy, for job creators, and for American workers. It is a good sign for a new age of chip manufacturing in this country.

We used to lead the world in making microchips, and thanks to the CHIPS and Science Act, we are already seeing the types of investments that will make America a major hub—the major hub, hopefully—for chip manufacturing once again.

The construction site that President Biden visits today is just one example of some very exciting activity happening all across the country. In my home State of New York, Micron has pledged up to \$100 billion over the next two decades to build state-of-the-art semiconductor fabs in New York. Another major company, GlobalFoundries, has announced they will build a second fab in the Albany region of Upstate New York.

Of course, the benefits extend across America. We are seeing chipmakers announce multibillion-dollar investments in States ranging from Ohio to Colorado, to Texas, to Arizona—the Arizona one MARK KELLY did a great job of championing—to Idaho. In nearly all cases, executives have explicitly cited the passage of CHIPS and Science as a major factor in their decision to build big in America.

Though these many investments range in size and type, the bottom line on CHIPS and Science is this: more American jobs, increased American manufacturing, a stronger American economy in the long run. This bill is about innovating and building the future in the United States, not in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party.

As always, I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who pushed this bill over the finish line. We are already reaping the immense benefits, and there will be many more to come.

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY

Mr. President, before I conclude, I want to acknowledge that this is a solemn and special day here at the Capitol. Later this morning, congressional leadership will gather to award the Congressional Gold Medal in honor of the brave men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department who defended the Capitol on January 6.

On that day, democracy faced maximum danger. These heroes responded with maximum valor, and all of us in the Senate and across the Capitol Complex are forever—forever—in their debt.

I will have more to say when I speak this morning at the Rotunda, but for now, I want to say thank you to Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUNT, the chair and ranking member of the Senate Rules Committee, who worked together on legislation to award the gold medal to these highly worthy public servants. This award would not be possible without the work of Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUNT, and I commend them for their work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, well, here we are, again, into the month of December with crucial business unfinished. Republicans spent months urging the Democratic majority not to neglect this year's National Defense Authorization Act, not to leave our Armed Forces to the last minute.

Five months ago, I called on our colleagues to process the Defense bill as soon as possible; but, instead, the majority has prioritized not just gigantic partisan spending sprees, but also a parade of mid-level nominations.

The Democratic leader didn't even bring a Senate NDAA to the floor, forcing Senators REED and INHOFE to conduct an informal conference with the House with a weakened hand. When the Republicans controlled the government, we put our servicemembers first.

In 2017, the Senate passed our version of NDAA in September, and we had voice-voted the conference report by Thanksgiving. In 2018, the Republican Senate was completely finished with NDAA by early August. But on Democrats' watch, the Senate's schedule has not matched the Nation's needs. We have spent time on less important matters while both the authorization and funding for our servicemembers have languished until the eleventh hour.

Even now—even now—House and Senate Democrats are still obstructing